



TEACH IT COFFEEHOUSE SESSION 12

1. Materials

For this session each student will need—

- his or her own Bible
- optional: the student journal page for Session 12 (Using the student journal page is optional in the coffeehouse setting since table space will be limited.)

You'll also need—

- a pack of pencils with erasers
- optional: a few spare Bibles for students who've forgotten theirs

2. Session Intro

GOALS OF SESSION 12

As students experience this session, they will—

- explore the details of Jesus' resurrection.
- be confronted with the reality and significance of the Resurrection.
- be challenged to personalize their belief in Jesus' resurrection.

PRAYER

Once the group has gathered, pray that the Lord will open your students' eyes to see life through the lens of Jesus' defeat of death.

OPEN

Defining the Defining Event

Help your students get their minds in gear by asking the following questions:

If you had to name one thing about Christianity that sets it apart from all other religions, what would it be?

Leave the discussion wide open, but conclude that Jesus' resurrection is the defining event of the Christian faith. No other faith has anything like it, and without it there would be no such thing as Christianity.

Why do you think it is that Christianity demands us to believe something so absurd from the world's perspective?

Elicit that belief in this absurd event demands another defining element of Christianity: faith. Remind them that Hebrews 11:6 says that without faith, it's impossible to please God. Doesn't it make sense that God would put something absurd at the core of Christianity, in order to activate the thing that pleases him most—faith?

3. Digging In

Resurrection Revelation

1. Look for the words **saw** and **looked**, along with any forms of these words. Using your pencils, mark these with a pair of eyes  or glasses  .
2. Really read the passage, and make sure you pick up on **who** is doing the seeing and **what** his or her response is.

While students are busy reading, draw the chart below (without the answers) on the whiteboard.

Then lead a discussion about the passage based on the “five Ws and the H” (*who, what, when, where, why, and how*). You’ll ask questions such as—*who was the first person to go to the tomb? What did she see? What was her response?* and so on. Keep pointing the group back to what they marked in Scripture, and record their observations on the whiteboard. Your board will look something like this:

Who saw?	What did he/she see?	How did he/she respond?
Mary Magdalene (v. 1)	-the stone had been taken away (v. 1) -two angels in white, seated where Jesus’ body had been (v. 11-12) -Jesus (v. 14)	-She ran to Peter and the other disciple; she was sure someone had taken Jesus’ body (v. 2). -She stood outside the tomb crying (v. 11). -She cried out, “Rabboni!” (Teacher) (v. 16). -She went to the disciples with the news that she’d seen the Lord (v. 18).
Peter (v. 3)	-the strips of linen lying there (v. 6) -the burial cloth that had been around Jesus’ head (v. 7) -the cloth folded by itself, separate from the linen (v. 7)	-He still didn’t understand from Scripture that Jesus had to rise from the dead (v. 9). -He went home (v. 10).
The other disciple (v. 3)	the strips of linen lying there (v. 5)	-He believed (v. 8). -He still didn’t understand from Scripture that Jesus had to rise from the dead (v. 9). -He went home (v. 10).

Once you’ve discussed *who* saw *what*, ask the students for their general impressions of this scene.

They may notice that the other disciple was faster than Peter or that the other disciple immediately believed when he saw the empty tomb, while there’s no record of Peter’s response.

4. Taking It Inward

Resurrection Refutation

Explain that over the years, many skeptics have put forth theories to discredit the Resurrection. As you share the three theories below, ask the students to refute them based on the info they’ve uncovered in their study of John 19 (Session 11) and 20.

THEORY 1

Christ didn't actually die on the cross, but managed to escape and later appeared to the disciples.

You may need to remind your group of the crucifixion scene, which they studied in the previous session—or ask them to reread John 19:25-34. Some observations:

-Mary Magdalene witnessed the Crucifixion and showed up at the tomb.

-A Roman soldier confirmed that Jesus was dead; he even stabbed him to be sure. Had Jesus not actually died on the cross, it would have been tough to manage an escape in his wounded state (especially without help or anyone noticing). Plus, he would have had to recover fully by Sunday.

THEORY 2

The disciples stole Jesus' body (as the Jews claimed in Matthew 28:12-13) and concocted the post-Resurrection events recorded in Scripture.

Note that the entire testimony of Jesus' resurrection hinges on Mary Magdalene. Share that in those days, a woman's testimony wasn't considered valid. If you were trying to persuade people to believe a lie, you'd never have the validity of the facts rest on a woman's testimony. Also, if Jesus' body had been stolen, you wouldn't have seen a burial cloth folded up by itself! No thief would take the time to organize grave clothes. And if you concocted the story, why would you continue to ardently support the story when you were being persecuted, under the threat of death, for supporting that story?

THEORY 3

Mary Magdalene and the disciples went to the wrong tomb.

If they went to the wrong tomb, how would you explain the presence of grave clothes? How do you explain an angel manifestation? How do you explain Mary Magdalene's encounter with Jesus at the "wrong" tomb?

5. Digging Deeper

Resurrection Proclamation

Share that it's no wonder skeptics would try to undermine Jesus' resurrection; it's the heart of the Christian faith. If you can explain away the Resurrection, you can explain away Christianity entirely—perhaps even the existence of God—and set up a worldview that allows you to live your own way, independently from God. Ask—

What about you? What difference does Jesus' resurrection make in your life?

Shortly after Jesus' resurrection, many people were asking that same question. That's why much of the New Testament is dedicated to helping people live out Jesus' resurrection in their daily lives. Invite the students to read the passages below, and challenge them to put themselves in the shoes of the very first readers of these Bible passages, to read as if they're hearing this info for the first time. If you're using the optional student journal pages, students can follow the prompts under Digging Deeper. Otherwise, have students mark in their Bibles the answers to the questions under the verse references below.

Romans 6:1-14

What did the Resurrection do for us?

1 Corinthians 15:12-44

What are the consequences we would be experiencing had Jesus not been raised from the dead?

6. Taking It Inward

Resurrection Transformation

After a few minutes, process the information as a group using these questions:

How are you taking advantage of the hope you've been given through Jesus' resurrection?

How are you experiencing the blessings and promises of resurrection power, which God has exerted on and in you?

Where do you tend to put most of your hope? Take a moment to think about a percentage for each of these five options, with your percentages totaling 100 percent.

- a. a new or better job**
- b. getting into college**
- c. a new boyfriend or girlfriend**
- d. new “stuff” such as gadgets or clothes**
- e. the Resurrection**

7. Wrapping It Up

Resurrection Action

After you ask the next question, give the students a minute to think about a response. If you're using the optional student journal pages, students can write a response under Wrapping It Up before sharing with the group.

If the reality of Jesus' resurrection became as real to you as the clothes you're wearing now, how would the following areas of your life change?

- personal Bible study**
- prayer life**
- thought life**
- talking about Jesus with others**

Have each student choose one of the four areas and share what would change in this area if the reality of Jesus' resurrection became more certain and real to them.

Before you close, ask for students to suggest a tangible object—that they can find at home—that would represent the area they circled.

Here are some suggestions:

-personal Bible study: a Bible

-prayer life: knee pads or a copy of Pray magazine

-thought life: a “brain game” such as Sudoku

-talking about Jesus with others: something that connotes “rescue,” such as a piece of rope, a roll of LifeSavers candy, or a life ring from a pool

Invite them to take a picture of that item and e-mail it to you sometime this week with a note sharing how they'd like to improve in that area. As the leader, save those pictures to send a few days later as a “check in” on how they're doing with their improvements.

Close by praying that the reality of Jesus' resurrection will work its way into every aspect of each student's life.

FINAL THOUGHTS

Since this is your final session in John, spend a few minutes helping your students reflect on their study experience using one or more of these options. Instruct your students—

- 1. Look over your marked-up Scripture sheets. Share a specific “Wow!” moment or express a truth that you never want to forget.**
- 2. Look over your journal pages and share a favorite session or meaningful exercise.**
- 3. Share your big takeaway from John. What’s the one thing you’ll never forget from this book, or the one change you’ve made as a result of this study?**